

Notes from 10/1/97 VITS with DNV

Mr. Roger Howe, the DNV general manager, performed the briefing.

- Rudy Frueboes is the NASA account manager
- Both are located in the Houston area and can be reached at 281-721-6818
- E-mail is first-dot-last @ DNV.com
- DNV will assign a team of 6 or so auditors to the NASA contract to provide continuity across agency and centers and to foster good working relationships

Initiating the Process

- Centers will initiate the contracted registration activities with DNV when they are ready
- An on-site briefing for management and the QMSC can be arranged prior to or integrated with the pre-certification audit

Documentation Review

- The first task is a review of the top level documentation at DNV
- they look for cross references to the Standard and downward references to Tier 2 documents
- it appears that they expect a more comprehensive Quality Manual than our current draft but that will be fixed in a revision Harold is working on
- they will provide written comments regarding traceability the Standard

Initial Site Visit

- An initial site visit, one day, will be scheduled to foster DNV's understanding of the facility and its personnel
- this will help DNV to plan the next phase (pre-certification audit)
- a written report will be used to mutually confirm the scope of the pre-certification audit

Pre-Certification Audit

- The audit will be structured around what the Center sees as important and as areas where major conformance issues may occur
- DNV expects that about 80% of documentation is in place at the time of the pre-certification audit (which is an indication to us of when to initiate activities)
- Audits will have less depth than those for the certification audit—looking for major problem areas
- DNV will not provide written nonconformances
- Intent is to allow DNV to form their impression of the Center's system

Certification Audit

- Scheduled 6-8 weeks after pre-certification audit
- Lead auditor will contact Center about 2-3 weeks prior to make arrangements for opening the audit, meeting places, guides, etc.
- The agenda will be set—where to go, who to visit
- The internal audit system and management responsibility will be looked at near end of the audit to avoid predisposing audit team to certain areas
- Auditors will discuss any problems they see to ensure that everyone understands what the issue is and to clarify any misunderstandings before formulating a nonconformance
- The lead auditor will close out the audit with management by explaining any nonconformances in an open discussion and will/won't recommend certification
- A written report will be filed with Center and DNV

Follow-up Audits

- Each follow-up or surveillance audit will cover several standard areas and a few others chosen by audit team
- There will be a three year cycle to cover all 20 elements

Other Information

- DNV has an audit checklist that will be mailed out by HQ
- Category 1 nonconformances are generally caused by a procedure not being implemented; there is a three month follow-up; if the follow-up doesn't show compliance the entire QMS will be checked in the next audit
- Category 2 nonconformances are generally an isolated case of a procedure not being followed; can usually be resolved in real time; can usually be written up and closed during the audit
- DNV's opinion is that documentation should be conservative and minimalist, aiming at efficiency and effectiveness
- DNV generally looks for a minimum of three months of records to demonstrate that a procedure is being followed; this is the lead auditor's judgment based on Center's definition of a record's criticality to the process
- For research areas, DNV looks for management direction and review of research and for reports; no requirement to have documentation or processes that inhibit innovation